

Dear soon-to-be-older-sibling,

Congrats! You're going to be a big brother or sister! I have experience of being an older sister ever since me and my family adopted a 3 year old boy from Morocco, North Africa whose name is Hakeem. If you need advice on how to be a good older sibling, here is a list of things you MUST KNOW.

1. Play with them when they ask for it
- 2 . Give them attention
3. Defend them
4. Take good care of them and be gentle
5. LOVE THEM NO MATTER WHAT THEY DO OR SAY

This list is soo important. Number 1 and 2 are alike. If you don't give your sibling enough time, they may get mad and won't be able to control their temper. Number 3 is very important as well. If your friend is saying rude things about him/her, defend them. I learned this the hard way. My little brother Hakeem had ruined(I mean that in the nicest way) my 12th birthday party. My friends Izzy, Priscilla, Keisha, and Carmen all said a couple of rude things about him, like "He's so annoying" and "I'm so glad I don't have a little brother". It made me mad and I stood up for him. Number 4 is a must do. If you toss them around and are crazy with them, they might end up getting hurt (and then your mom will get mad at you :) ). The last one is the most important. If they wreck your room, hit you or hurt your feelings, you still have to love them. They are your best friends. The last one goes for older and younger siblings. You may feel like you hate them in the moment but really deep, deep down I know that you know that you love them. Here's a list of things you can do to calm yourself down if they do something that makes you mad.

1. Scream into a pillow
2. Hug a stuffed animal
3. Punch a pillow
4. Sleep
5. Eat your favorite snack (chocolate)
6. Talk it out

Screaming in your pillow and punching your pillow allows you to let out all of your anger. If you're sad or mad, hugging a stuffed animal can help, allowing you to

squeeze it really hard or cry into it. Sleeping may help you to recharge yourself and be more happy. Lets say your favorite snack is chocolate. It may help you to eat it like me. Like last time, the last one is the most important. Talking it out with a family member or friend may help you realize it's not that bad, or maybe it will help you calm down.

Though in the moment you might think they are the worst people alive, your younger and older siblings will always be there for you especially when you need it most. I love Hakeem with my whole heart. Plus: You are lucky to have a sibling. According to Pew Research Center, in 2015, 22% of people were an only child.

At the end of the day, your family are the most important people in your life. You are so lucky to have them. Remember to do these things with your younger siblings: play with them when they ask for it, give them attention, defend them , take good care of them and be gentle, and LOVE THEM NO MATTER WHAT THEY DO OR SAY, then you'll be fine. If they make you mad, remember to scream into a pillow, hug a stuffed animal, punch a pillow, sleep, eat your favorite snack (chocolate), talk it out. The most important thing is to take care of them and love them always, because in the future they'll be the most important people to you.

Love,

*Aleena Siddiqui*

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